

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

With reference to Fig. 5A, each of the equalizer plate sets 50a-c may be provided in an equalizer plate 71 in which a set of channels 62a is formed. Each of the channels [[62]] 62a includes multiple linear segments, of which only linear segment 64a is shown, arranged similarly or identical to channels 62 (Figs. 4 and 5). Channels 62a are intended to replace channels 62 in inlet plate 48 (Figs. 4 and 5). Consequently, an inlet plate 48a is modified to include three rows of inlet passageways 52a each of which supplies thermoplastic material to the center of one channel 62a for subsequent distribution to downstream equalizer plate 72. Equalizer plate 71 is installed in recess 56a of inlet plate 48a between equalizer plate 72 and inlet plate 48a and also in the other two recesses in inlet plate 48a (not shown but similar to recesses 57 and 58 in Fig. 3).

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 12, with the following rewritten paragraph:

With renewed reference to Fig. 3, seal 87 provides a fluid-tight junction between a downstream side of the filter support plate 86 and an upstream side of the combining plate 42. The combining plate 42 has internal liquid passageways 118 (Fig. 2) configured to receive the sheet-like flows of flowable thermoplastic materials from each of the linear flow equalizers 40 and to combine the flows to generate a bicomponent filament arrangement, such as a sheath/core arrangement or a side-by-side arrangement. In a sheath/core arrangement, for example, the flow

path within the combining plate 42 of one of the two polymers is interposed and brought into coaxial alignment with the flow path of the other of the two polymers and directed the spinneret plate 44. The spinneret plate 44 has multiple spinneret holes or orifices 120 (Fig. 2) registered with liquid outlets in the combining plate 42 from which bicomponent filaments 122 (Fig. 2) are extruded for subsequent solidification, attenuation and collection as a non-woven web.